



LEGISLATIVE
AUDITOR
GENERAL

A Performance Audit of the Utah System of Higher Education

A Review of System Collaboration, Efficiency,
and Workforce Alignment

Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee
January 23, 2025



UHBE and USHE Should Adapt to Address Emerging Challenges in Higher Education



Utah institutions will face enrollment decline after 2028



Employers are easing degree requirements



Private/online institutions attract students at high rates

As institutions continue to grow, the system will need to find ways to adapt and become more efficient.



Chapter 1

USHE Needs Stronger Data to Meet Workforce Demand and Maintain Relevance



SB 192 (2024 General Session)

Institution presidents, in consultation with the Board of Trustees, are to:

“Exercise powers related to the institution’s employees, including faculty and persons under contract with the institution, by implementing... program reductions or discontinuances, ... [and] other measures that provide cost savings, facilitate efficiencies, or otherwise enable the institution to meet the institution’s mission and role.”





Better Program Data Is Needed To Understand Program ROI

President



Program Data

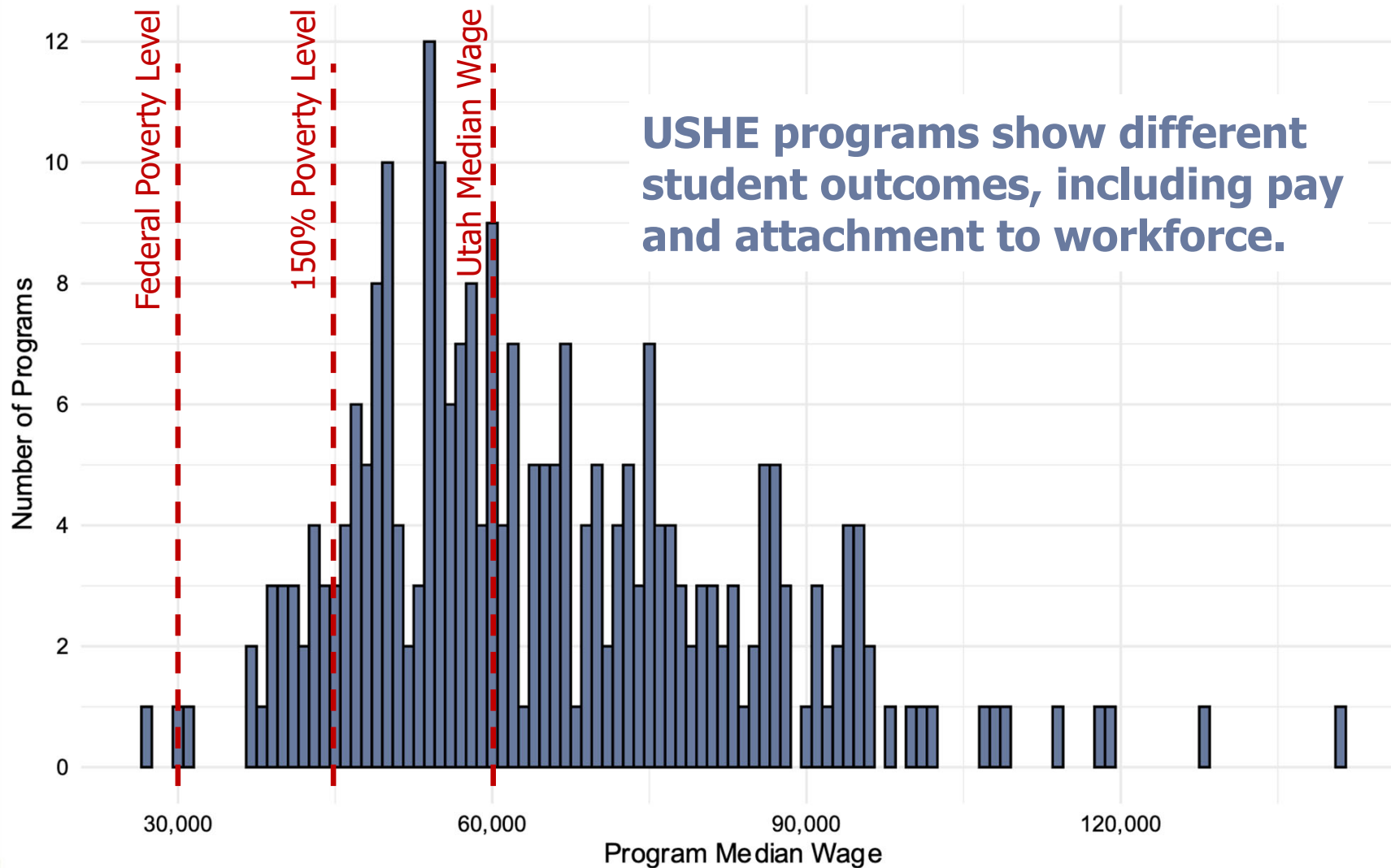


- Cost
- Enrollment
- Completion Rates
- Graduation Rates
- Employment Outcomes

Conclusion: Program ROI is not known.
This data is needed in president decision-making.

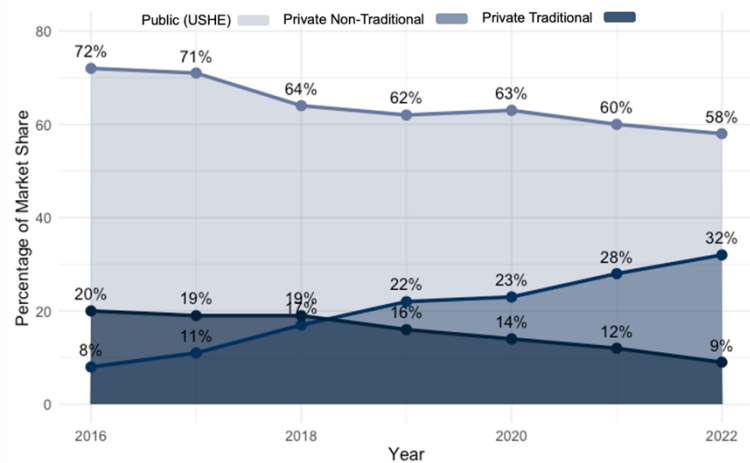


USHE programs show different student outcomes, including pay and attachment to workforce.

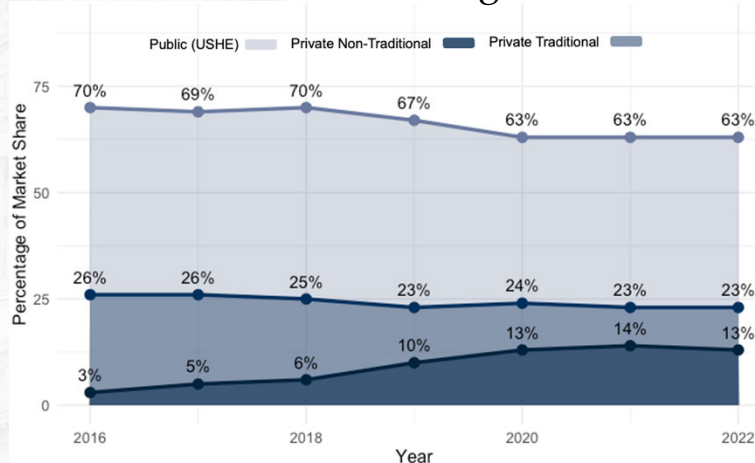


USHE Student Market Share

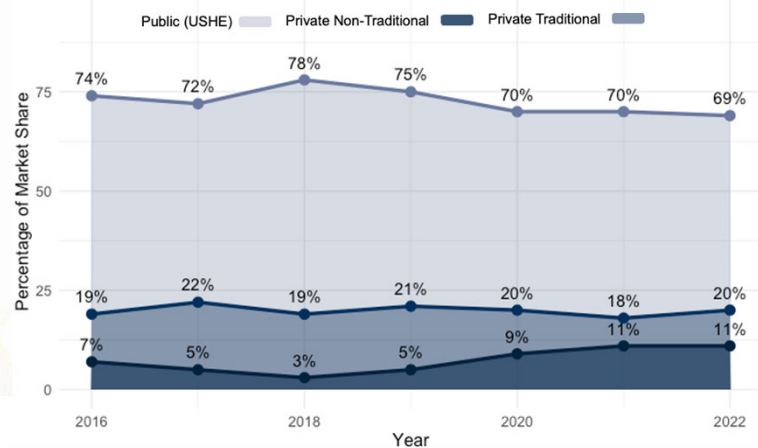
Nursing



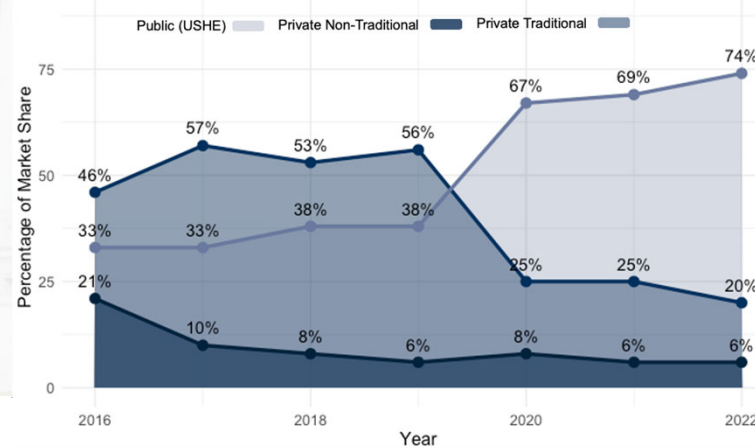
Accounting



Software Development



Data Science





Recommendations:

We Recommend:

USHE and Institutions create uniform methods to calculate program-level data

Programs be evaluated based on costs, enrollments, completion rates, employment outcomes, and workforce demand

USHE and institutions incorporate best practices from private institutions





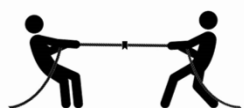
Chapter 2

Higher Education Governance Has Improved, But the System Needs to Be Better Coordinated



The Utah Board of Higher Education Should Enhance System Efficiency

Utah's Degree-Granting Institutions are Not Operating as a system



Competition



Mission Clarity



Mission Creep



Focus on Growth





The Utah Board of Higher Education Should Enhance System Efficiency

The Utah Board of Higher Ed should provide stronger clarity of roles, long-term planning, and oversight



We Recommend

- UBHE create a long-term plan outlining the unique roles each degree-granting institution will fulfill over the next 20 years.
- UBHE and Commissioner promote stronger system coordination by providing stronger oversight of those roles.



Presidents Should Make Institutional Decisions with the System in Mind

Institutions should review areas where program inefficiencies exist

- Institutions Offer **Duplicative Programs**, Some with **Low Student Graduation**
- Programs Have Varying Student Outcomes, Including **Lower Pay and Lower Attachment to the Workforce**
- Improved Justification for **New and Ongoing** Programs





The Legislature Has Policy Options for Further Systemwide Leadership

- **The Legislature Could Consider:**
 - **Requiring Ongoing Review and Reporting for System Efficiency and Effectiveness**
 - **Whether to Provide System-Level Performance Funding to Strengthen USHE Alignment and Outcomes**





LEGISLATIVE
AUDITOR
GENERAL

Questions

Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee
January 23, 2025